

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 0373

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDIP, PINR, VM, ID
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER'S VIEWS ON VIETNAMESE VISIT

1. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER MOCHTAR KUSUMAATMADJA AND FOREIGN DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS SURYONO DARUSMAN CONCENTRATED ON THE RECENT VISIT BY FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM NGUYEN DUY TRINH DURING TALKS ON JANUARY 9 WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OAKLEY AND THE AMBASSADOR. BOTH FOREIGN DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS WERE BULLISH ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR INCREASED COOPERATION WITH VIETNAM, BUT MOCHTAR IN PARTICULAR SAW A DEFINITE NEED FOR INDONESIA TO TAKE A FIRM POSITION IN DEALING WITH VIETNAM'S NEW LEADERS.

2. ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER MOCHTAR SAID THAT RECENT VISITS BY SRV LEADERS TO FOUR OF THE FIVE ASEAN CAPITALS SHOW THAT VIETNAM IS "COMING OUT OF ITS SHELL." INDONESIA BELIEVES SOUTHEAST ASIA IS "ON THE THRESHOLD" OF AN ERA OF INCREASED,
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THOUGH CAREFULLY ARRANGED, COOPERATION BUT THE NEW VIETNAMESE LEADERS WILL HAVE TO BE HANDLED CAREFULLY. THEY ARE OBVIOUSLY FEELING THEIR OATS AS A RESULT OF VICTORY IN THE WAR AND THEIR SIZEABLE MANPOWER AND OTHER RESOURCES. MOCHTAR SAID HE BROUGHT THINGS MORE INTO PERSPECTIVE BY TELLING THEM AT THE OUTSET OF THEIR TALKS THAT ONLY TWO NATIONS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA OBTAINED THEIR INDEPENDENCE BY

FIGHTING FOR IT - VIETNAM AND INDONESIA. INDONESIA VALUED ITS INDEPENDENCE AND WOULD DO EVERYTHING NECESSARY TO PROTECT IT.

3. ACCORDING TO MCHTAR, THE VIETNAMESE DELEGATION WANTED TO CONCLUDE A TRADE AGREEMENT IMMEDIATELY, BUT THE GOI TOOK THE POSITION THAT THIS WAS NOT POSSIBLE AS LONG AS THE BOUNDARY ON THE CONTINENTAL SHELF REMAINED UNSETTLED. BUSINESS WOULD NOT OPERATE IN THIS AREA IF ULTIMATE CONTROL WAS UNCERTAIN. THE VIETNAMESE PUSHED STRONGLY FOR A PROVISION IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE THAT NEITHER SIDE WOULD TAKE ANY ACTION (READ OIL EXPLORATION) TO DEVELOP ECONOMIC RESOURCES IN THE DISPUTED AREA. INDONESIA, ACCORDING TO MOCHTAR, REFUSED THIS PRESSURE AND THREATENED AT ONE POINT TO SCRAP THE WHOLE IDEA OF ISSUING A COMMUNIQUE RATHER THAN CEASE OIL EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES ALREADY UNDERWAY. AT THE LAST MINUTE THE VIETNAMESE CAVED AND A SATISFACTORY COMMUNIQUE WAS ISSUED.

4. MOCHTAR SAID VIETNAMESE VISITS TO FOUR ASEAN CAPITALS WOULD SEEM TO PROVIDE A NEW BASIS FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION. ADVANCING THIS IDEA, DARUSMAN SAID THE VIETNAMESE PLUGGED STRONGLY THE THEME OF SOUTHEAST ASIA FOR THE SOUTHEAST ASIANS. THEY WANTED NEUTRALIZATION AND THE REMOVAL OF ALL FOREIGN BASES FROM THE AREA. INDONESIA AGREED IN PRINCIPLE, BUT SAID THAT THE U.S. BASES IN THE PHILIPPINES WERE NEEDED AS A TEMPORARY MEASURE. WHEN NO LONGER REQUIRED, THEY WOULD FADE AWAY.
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5. DARUSMAN SAID THE VIETNAMESE DELEGATES EXPRESSED SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE MILITARY "OVERTONES" OF ASEAN, BUT GAVE NO INDICATION THEY WANTED TO WRECK THE ORGANIZATION. INDONESIA EXPLAINED THAT THE LIMITED MILITARY COOPERATION WHICH DID EXIST WAS DONE ON A BILATERAL BASIS AND NOT THROUGH ASEAN. DARUSMAN NOTED THAT THE PITCH OF VIETNAMESE PROPAGANDA AGAINST THE ORGANIZATION HAD DECLINED CONSIDERABLY DURING RECENT WEEKS.

6. AS AN INTERESTING SIDELIGHT, MOCHTAR SAID INDONESIA HAD ORIGINALLY HOPED THE VISIT WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL AFTER THE END OF JANUARY. HANOI INSISTED ON AN EARLIER DATE, PROBABLY BECAUSE OF DETERIORATION IN ITS RELATIONS WITH CAMBODIA. THIS INDICATED THAT THIS SRV POSITION IS NOT AS STRONG AS THE VIETNAMESE PROTEND. THE VIETNAMESE DEMONSTRATED THEIR ARROGANCE BY INSISTING THAT INDONESIA PICK UP THE ENTIRE TAB FOR THE OFFICIAL PARTY OF 15 PLUS 6 AIRPLANE CREW MEMBERS AND 5 GUARDS FOR THE AIRCRAFT. THE GOI NOT ONLY PROVIDED ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ALL OF THE VISITORS, BUT ALSO AGREED, AFTER CHECKING WITH SUHARTO, TO REPEATED VIETNAMESE REQUESTS TO REFUEL THE PLANE AND RESTOCK IT WITH FOOD AT INDONESIA'S EXPENSE. HOWEVER, ON MORE SERIOUS ISSUES

THE GOI STOOD ITS GROUND.

7. COMMENT: BOTH MOCHTAR AND DARUSMAN SEE INDONESIA'S HAND STRENGTHENED IN NEGOTIATING DIFFERENCES WITH HANOI AS A RESULT OF THE LATTER'S PROBLEMS WITH CAMBODIA AND ITS INTERNAL DIFFICULTIES. THEY GAVE THE IMPRESSION THEY WILL MAKE THE MOST OF THIS SITUATION. THEY OBVIOUSLY HOPE TO BRING VIETNAM INTO SOME TYPE OF GREATER REGIONAL COOPERATION, BUT ARE NOT PREPARED TO SCRAP ASEAN IN THE PROCESS. THEY ARE ALSO APPREHENSIVE OVER EVIDENT SRV AMBITION FOR DOMINANT SOUTHEAST ASIAN LEADERSHIP.
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